

Whenever I or another Member of Congress would visit the White House, we could always count on Rachel to greet us with a smile or funny story. And whenever foreign dignitaries visited Capitol Hill, we could always count on Rachel to be right there with them, ensuring that foreign officials had a safe and comfortable experience while visiting our Nation's capital.

Rachel always fulfilled her duties with all of the dependability, professionalism and love of country that one would expect from a Secret Service agent. But she also brought a kind and lighthearted nature to the job that I, for one, will never forget.

And let me add that I have had the pleasure of employing Secret Service agents in my office through Congressional fellowship programs and, like Rachel, each and every one of them has represented the best our Nation has to offer.

From her upbringing in Orange City, Iowa, to her studies at Northwestern and Sangamon State Universities, to the U.S. Secret Service, Rachel has always excelled and stood out as a leader and as someone people can count on.

As she moves on to bigger and better things, I'd like to congratulate Rachel Klay on a proud career of service to our country and wish her the best of luck in whatever the future holds.

H. RES. 162: RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE NEGRO BASEBALL LEAGUES AND THEIR PLAYERS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS, DEDICATION AND SACRIFICES TO BASEBALL AND THE NATION

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, since 1885, long before Major League Baseball was inaugurated in 1903, African Americans were organizing into their own professional leagues. Unfortunately, racial prejudice and lack of adequate financial backing undermined the success of these initial leagues. However, this changed dramatically with the inception of the first successful Negro league. On May 20, 1920, the Negro National League played its first game. Its creation was the result of the efforts of an African American player and manager named Andrew "Rube" Foster. Mr. Foster's success inspired the formation of other leagues as well as thousands of children nationwide.

Six separate leagues that emerged between 1920 and 1960 are collectively known as the Negro Leagues: the Negro National League, Eastern Colored League, American Negro League, East-West League, Negro Southern League, and Negro American League. The lasting legacy of the Negro Leagues includes inspiring events and the tremendous baseball players. They produced what baseball aficionado doesn't know about the first Negro World Series? On October 3, 1924, the first game was played between the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro National League and Hilldale of Philadelphia of the Eastern Colored

League. This historic and exhaustive first series lasted ten games, covered a span of almost three weeks, and was played in four different cities. In the end, Kansas City claimed the championship. Clearly, this was a remarkable and inspiring event.

What baseball aficionado doesn't know Jackie Robinson, the first African American to break the baseball color barrier? Leroy "Satchel" Paige, who was considered one of the greatest pitchers of all time? Josh Gibson, who was a prolific home-run hitter; or Larry Doby, the first African American to play in the American League in July 1947; or John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil, who was the first African American coach in the Major Leagues, played a major role in establishing the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, and was posthumously honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom December 6, 2006?

Madam Speaker, Black history in Major League Baseball has been filled with many successes and a struggle for equity. Therefore, it is important that we remember and honor these players. In breaking down the baseball color barrier, these pioneers dealt a blow to hatred and prejudice across America. I encourage all Americans to recognize the achievements, dedication, and sacrifice that these Black players made to baseball and the Nation.

TRIBUTE TO ST. PETER'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor St. Peter's United Church of Christ located in the small community of Stone Church, Illinois, on their 150th anniversary. St. Peter's United Church of Christ separated from the Independent Evangelical Lutheran St. Johannes Congregation, the mother church, in 1857.

The "Old Stone Church" was built in 1858 and dedicated on January 2, 1859. On March 26, 1948, Good Friday morning, a fire destroyed the entire church. In 1950 ground was broken for a new church, and it was dedicated on March 11, 1951. In 1955 ground was broken for a new parsonage, which was dedicated on October 7, 1956, and in 1958 the Brotherhood was organized. In 1974 the Education Building was built in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Doelling.

On February 11, 2007, St. Peter's began celebrating their sesquicentennial. After several months of celebration, a dedication service will be held on August 26, 2007, followed by a noon dinner at Okawville Community Club where a pictorial history of the Church will be displayed.

HONORING THE SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACES DISTRICT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today together with my col-

league Ms. WOOLSEY to honor the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District located in Northern California. On March 3, the agency received the prestigious County Leadership in Conservation Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) and Trust for Public Land (TPL).

This award is given annually to counties that showcase the best practices in innovative conservation work. As one of the first public agencies in the nation funded by a sales tax to protect agriculture, the Open Space District has continued to distinguish itself nationally. It has protected almost 70,000 acres, including farms, greenbelts, natural open spaces, and recreational areas.

The District was formed as a result of public concern over urbanization in Sonoma County as subdivisions, malls and parking lots threatened to overwhelm land the famed botanist Luther Burbank once called "God's chosen spot." Responding to the very real threat of sprawl, farmers, environmentalists and community leaders joined together in 1990 to pass a sales tax to fund preservation and open space acquisition. So successful is the District that the tax was renewed with a 75-percent approval vote in 2006. Today the tax provides approximately \$13 million a year for the District's land conservation and acquisition programs.

The County Open Space Authority is responsible for levying and distributing the funding, while the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors acts as the Board of Directors. The Supervisors appoint a 17-member Open Space Advisory Committee, representing various stakeholders and interest groups, to recommend acquisitions. Manager Andrea Mackenzie works with all of these groups and other local organizations in identifying and purchasing suitable properties (or conservation easements) and determining the best use for them, from agriculture to resource conservation to public access or recreation.

Madam Speaker, Sonoma County has a beautiful and diverse environment ranging from oak savannah to bay wetlands to coastal redwood forests. Its farmlands are among the richest on the planet and grow grapes for world-class wines, crispy Gravenstein apples and luscious Crane melons and many specialty crops. Its pastures and rangelands support both dairy and meat production. The District ensures that our children's children will always have woodland and hillside trails to hike and homegrown food to enjoy.

These open spaces keep Sonoma County's agricultural economy healthy, provide recreation for visitors and residents, and preserve the very character of the county. I congratulate the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District upon the receipt of the well-deserved County Leadership in Conservation Award and look forward to continuing to work with the District to preserve Sonoma County's natural beauty and agricultural bounty.